

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 10 December 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to attach herewith the final communiqué of the 36th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit, issued in Riyadh on 10 December 2015 (see annex).

It would be highly appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated to all members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Abdallah **Al-Mouallimi**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



**Annex to the letter dated 10 December 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

[Original: Arabic]

**Final communiqué of the thirty-sixth session of the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council**

At the invitation of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia (may God preserve and protect him), the Supreme Council of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) held its thirty-sixth session in Riyadh on 27 and 28 Safar A.H. 1437 (9 and 10 December A.D. 2015). The session was chaired by King Salman as chair of the current session of the Supreme Council. The following distinguished members were in attendance:

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister, ruler of Dubai, United Arab Emirates

His Majesty King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa, King of Bahrain

His Highness Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for cabinet affairs of the Sultanate of Oman

His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar

His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait

His Excellency Mr. Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, also participated in the meeting.

1. The Supreme Council congratulated the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (may God preserve and protect him), on assuming the chair of the current session of the Supreme Council. It commended his opening statement and his determination to foster cooperation among member States in all areas.
2. The Supreme Council expressed its deep appreciation for the considerable and genuine efforts and achievements of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar (may God preserve and protect him) and his distinguished Government during his chairmanship of the thirty-fifth session of the Supreme Council.
3. The Supreme Council welcomed the vision for the promotion of joint Gulf action submitted by King Salman as chair of the current session. It thanked him for his fine contribution to the work of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which would enhance its regional and international standing. The Supreme Council adopted the vision and tasked the Ministerial Council, the competent ministerial committees and the secretariat with implementing its provisions, on the understanding that implementation would be completed in 2016.
4. The Supreme Council reviewed the status of consultations on the proposal submitted by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud (may God have mercy on his soul), for a transition from the

cooperation phase to the unity phase. It directed the ministerial council to continue consultations and complete its examination of the issue in cooperation with the chair of the pertinent committee, in accordance with the decision adopted by the Supreme Council at its thirty-third session held in Sakhir, Kingdom of Bahrain, in December 2012.

5. The Supreme Council affirmed its full support for the United Arab Emirates as host country of Expo 2020 and wished the people of the United Arab Emirates further progress and prosperity.

6. The Supreme Council affirmed its support for the State of Qatar as host of the World Cup 2022, and stressed that the States members backed Qatar in all actions conducive to making the event a success. It wished the people of Qatar further progress and prosperity.

7. The Supreme Council reviewed the recommendations and follow-up reports submitted by the Ministerial Council and the progress made since the previous session towards joint action in all areas. It commended the efforts made towards strengthening the joint cooperation process, in particular with regard to strengthening Gulf citizenship in order to ensure greater complementarity among GCC member States and integration among their citizens. The actions that had been taken constituted significant achievements towards broadening and deepening the mission of GCC. The Supreme Council examined the rapid political developments in the region and the world and took the following decisions:

#### **The joint action process**

8. In order to raise awareness of the benefits of GCC for citizens of the Gulf, the Supreme Council directed the secretariat to continue holding information meetings and awareness-raising campaigns in member States through various media, with a focus on the Council's action to ensure prosperity for Gulf citizens, keep them safe and preserve their gains.

#### **Economic and development affairs**

9. The Supreme Council discussed the joint economic and development cooperation process with a view to achieving full economic citizenship. It directed the secretariat to establish a committee of experts and intellectuals from member States to develop approaches aimed at attaining full economic citizenship, taking into consideration sustainable development needs of States members, and at improving the competitiveness of the national workforce.

10. With a view to fostering partnerships with the private sector, the Supreme Council directed the secretariat to continue to arrange regular consultative meetings between the committee on trade cooperation and heads of Chambers of Commerce in member States, and to report to the Supreme Council on the outcomes of those meetings.

11. The Supreme Council reviewed the recommendations and reports of the Ministerial Council, the ministerial committees and the secretariat.

It adopted the following documents:

(a) The harmonized consumer protection system for States members, taking the form of a binding law;

(b) The harmonized rules on financial acquisitions in Gulf States, which should be followed on an indicative basis pending the completion of a harmonized set of rules for the full integration and complementarity of financial markets in States members;

(c) The implementing regulation on GCC citizens' equal access to health services in Government hospitals and clinics managed by the ministry of health of each State;

(d) The procedural guidelines regulating the strategic reserve of medicine, vaccines and medical supplies for emergency and crisis situations and the register of medical supplies of GCC States.

The Supreme Council considered the reports on the functioning of the GCC customs union, the Gulf common market, the monetary union, the updated Gulf plan for the prevention of non-communicable diseases, the water strategy, education and youth. It also considered the GCC rail link project, stressing that it was important to remain committed to completing that strategic project in accordance with the decisions of the Council.

#### **Joint military action**

12. The distinguished representatives ratified the decisions taken by the Joint Defence Council at its fourteenth session concerning areas for joint military action, particularly the current steps to operationalize the unified military command; the adoption of a budget for that purpose, including the required human resources, and the recruitment of retired soldiers from GCC States with qualifications, experience and skills in order to provide consultancy services to secretariat bodies.

13. The distinguished representatives expressed their satisfaction at the successful steps taken to establish the unified military command. They underscored the need to complete the measures necessary for its operationalization and intensify efforts, including the required actions and studies, to accelerate the development of an integrated and multifaceted GCC defence system.

#### **Security coordination and cooperation**

14. The Supreme Council ratified the decisions taken by the distinguished ministers of the interior at their thirty-fourth meeting held in the State of Qatar in November 2015. They expressed their satisfaction at what had been achieved in the area of security. They approved the reform and development of the comprehensive GCC security strategy and decided to adopt it.

15. The Supreme Council approved the signature of a convention establishing the Gulf police headquarters in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

#### **Counter-terrorism**

16. The Supreme Council reaffirmed its consistent stand against terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations, irrespective of their motives, justification or source. It stressed the need to eradicate the sources of terrorism. It emphasized its commitment to combating the deviant ideology underpinning and nourishing the terrorist groups, an ideology that distorted and was unrelated to the pure Islamic faith. The Supreme Council affirmed that tolerance and coexistence

among nations and peoples was one of the foundations of the domestic and foreign policy of GCC States. It stressed its opposition to the terrorist threats facing the region and the world.

17. The Supreme Council emphasized the need to deal resolutely with the grave threat posed by terrorism, terrorist movements and their supporters. It commended the efforts of States members at the regional and international levels, and stated that the international community should assume its responsibility to support the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre in New York and coordinate efforts and exchange information.

18. The Supreme Council directed the competent GCC authorities to take systematic action through diplomacy, outreach and the media, in order to disseminate the true image of Islam, the value of moderation and the moderate approach of the States of the Gulf. They also directed the competent authorities to make effective use of the media and social networks, and to convene conferences, seminars and meetings with domestic and international actors. The authorities should redouble their efforts to counter incitement to violence and terrorism and tackle extremism, racism, hatred, sectarian strife and the recruitment of fighters and sympathizers for terrorist and extremist organizations.

19. The Supreme Council strongly condemned the terrorist bombings of mosques in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. It also condemned the acts of terrorism against Bahrain, in which a number of security officers and innocent civilians had lost their lives. It commended the security services for thwarting operations to smuggle highly hazardous explosives, weapons and ammunition from Iran to Bahrain. The Supreme Council stressed that the States of the Gulf supported all of the actions taken by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain to preserve the safety and security of their citizens and residents. It expressed its confidence in the security services' ability to detect terrorist plots, bring the perpetrators to justice and hold them to account.

20. The Supreme Council emphasized that States members would continue to take part in the international coalition to combat the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and would support all domestic and international efforts to combat terrorist organizations and eradicate their misguided ideology. The Supreme Council stressed the need to intensify coordination and bilateral and international cooperation in order to confront the challenges facing the region; eliminate terrorism and its cross-border threat; eradicate the sources of the financing of terrorism; and strengthen the security and stability of the region.

21. The Supreme Council condemned the terrorist attacks perpetrated by ISIL in Paris on 13 November 2015, which had claimed numerous civilian victims. The Supreme Council stated that GCC States stood by France and the French people and supported all of their actions. It condemned the terrorist acts committed by ISIL and other terrorist organizations in Egypt, Mali, Tunisia, the United States of America, Baghdad, Beirut and elsewhere. It affirmed that it would continue to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and to eradicate terrorist organizations, which were an affront to all revealed religions and human values. In that connection, the Supreme Council welcomed Security Council resolution 2249 (2014), which was adopted on 20 November 2015, concerning counter-terrorism and tackling ISIL and other terrorist groups. The Supreme Council called on competent stakeholders to highlight the true, pure image of Islam, the faith of tolerance and

peace. It called on Arab and Islamic youth to speak out with the voice of reason and eschew the forces of darkness and terrorism.

### **Legal affairs**

22. The Supreme Council welcomed the outcomes of the ninth periodic meeting of the distinguished heads of GCC legislative councils (Shura councils, parliaments and national and ummah bodies) held in Riyadh in November 2015. They commended the councils' efforts and their vision for joint parliamentary action in the Gulf.

### **Strategic discussions and negotiations**

23. The Supreme Council welcomed the progress made in implementing the outcomes of the Camp David Summit held in May 2015. It underscored the need for swift implementation of the agreements reached by the working groups and joint committees established with the United States in various areas. It welcomed the progress made in fostering strategic partnerships with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Kingdom of Morocco, and the outcomes of the meetings of ministers for foreign affairs with their counterparts in other States and groups. Those efforts had strengthened the role and profile of GCC at the regional and international levels.

### **Consultative Commission of the Supreme Council**

24. The Supreme Council considered the perspectives of the Consultative Commission on matters that it had been mandated to study:

- Fostering partnership between the public and private sectors in GCC member States.
- Growing the income and enhancing the well-being of the citizens GCC member States.
- The future of oil and gas as a resource and source of energy in GCC States and the importance of maintaining them as a strategic choice in relation to security and development.

It was decided to transmit the above-mentioned perspectives to the competent ministerial committees, so that they might benefit from them. It was further decided to mandate the Consultative Commission to consider the following matters:

- Development of a comprehensive environmental cooperation strategy for GCC member States.
- Promoting investment in farming and livestock projects by the private sector in Gulf countries.
- The productivity of the citizens of Gulf countries, its determining factors and means of increasing it.

### **Political affairs**

#### **The situation in the occupied Palestinian territories and developments in the Arab-Israeli conflict**

25. The Supreme Council reiterated its firm and long-standing positions regarding regional issues, the most significant of which is the question of Palestine, stressing

that a comprehensive, just and lasting peace could not be achieved unless Israel withdrew fully from all Arab territories occupied in 1967 and an independent Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, was established in accordance with the Arab Peace Initiative and the relevant, internationally binding resolutions.

26. The Council condemned the continued occupation of Arab territories by Israel and the actions it has taken to alter the identity and features of Al-Quds al-Sharif, and the persistence of arbitrary arrest, colonization and collective punishment of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The Council also strongly condemned the violations committed by the Israeli occupying authorities against the Palestinian people and the dangerous escalation in the systematic attacks that Israel has been carrying out since early October 2015 against the Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds Al-Sharif. The purpose of those attacks is to divide the Holy Mosque in time and space, Judaize Al-Quds Al-Sharif and isolate it from its Palestinian and Arab environment. The Council furthermore condemned the repeated violation of the sanctity of the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli settlers and officials, in flagrant violation of the most fundamental human rights.

27. The Supreme Council urged the international community to shoulder its responsibilities and take every measure possible to protect the Palestinian people and holy sites. The Council also called for a redoubling of efforts aimed at putting pressure on Israel and compelling it to stop such practices, which violate internationally binding resolutions and are contrary to human values.

28. The Supreme Council stressed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Arab territories are illegal under international law and are a major obstacle to achieving a lasting and comprehensive peace.

29. The Supreme Council welcomed the raising of the flag of the State of Palestine at United Nations Headquarters, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 10 September 2015. The Council also welcomed the outcome of the emergency ministerial meeting of the Arab Peace Commission that was held in Cairo in August 2015.

30. The Supreme Council called on donors to fulfil the pledges made at the Cairo Conference for Gaza's reconstruction and underscored the importance of lifting the Israeli blockade of the Gaza Strip.

#### **The occupation by Iran of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates**

31. The Supreme Council reaffirmed its long-standing position, which it had stressed in all its previous communiqués, rejecting the continued occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the three islands belonging to the United Arab Emirates, namely, Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa. In that connection, the Council:

- Reaffirmed its support for the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over its three islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, and over the territorial waters, airspace, continental shelf and exclusive economic zone of the three islands, which are an integral part of the United Arab Emirates;
- Reiterated that the practices, decisions and actions of Iran in respect of the three islands are null and void and do not alter any historical and legal facts, all of which support the sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over its three islands;

- Called on the Islamic Republic of Iran to respond to the efforts of the United Arab Emirates to resolve the question through direct negotiations or recourse to the International Court of Justice.

### **Relations with Iran**

32. The Supreme Council rejected completely the ongoing interference by Iran in the internal affairs of member States and the States of the region. The Council called for full adherence to the fundamental principles of good-neighbourliness, respect for the sovereignty of States, non-interference in internal affairs and the non-use of force or threat of force. The Council rejected the statements made by certain officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran against GCC member States, their interference in member States' internal affairs and their attempt to sow dissension and promote sectarian strife among the citizens of member States, in violation of those States' sovereignty and independence. The Supreme Council also urged Iran to cease such practices immediately and to abide by the principles of good-neighbourliness, the law and international instruments and norms, so as preserve the security and stability of the region.

### **The Iranian nuclear programme**

33. The Supreme Council affirmed the need for compliance with the agreement concluded by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the five plus one group in July 2015 regarding that country's nuclear programme. In that connection, the Council underscored the important role of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the necessity of putting into place an effective mechanism to verify the implementation of the Agreement, conduct inspections and carry out oversight functions. Sanctions must be imposed on Iran promptly and effectively should it fail to fulfil its obligations under the agreement.

The Council stressed the importance of implementing Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) regarding the above-mentioned nuclear agreement, including with respect to ballistic missiles and other weapons. It also expressed its profound concern regarding the firing by Iran on 10 October 2015 of a medium-range ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear weapons, stressing that this was a clear violation of Security Council resolution 1929 (2010).

34. The Supreme Council affirmed the importance of making the Arabian Gulf and the Middle East a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, while emphasizing the right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the need to address the environmental concerns of the States of the region and the need for Iran to become a signatory to all instruments related to nuclear safety.

### **The current situation in the Arab world**

#### **Syria**

35. The Supreme Council reaffirmed its long-standing position regarding the need to maintain the unity, stability and territorial integrity of Syria.

36. The Supreme Council expressed its profound concern at the worsening of the Syrian crisis and the deterioration of the humanitarian situation as the Assad regime and the militias supporting it continue to carry out bombing and commit murder.



The conduct of the regime has had serious repercussions for civilians, flagrantly violated human rights principles and international humanitarian law, and has led to an ever-increasing rise in the number of displaced persons and refugees, both in Syria and in neighbouring countries.

37. The Supreme Council welcomed the outcomes of the talks held in Vienna on 14 November 2015 on finding a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis. Such a solution should be based on the communiqué issued at the conclusion of the first Geneva conference and should fulfil the aspirations of the Syrian people and ensure the preservation of State institutions.

38. The Supreme Council welcomed the hosting by Saudi Arabia of a conference for the Syrian opposition from 8 to 10 December 2015 in Riyadh. The hosting of that conference reflected the support of Saudi Arabia for a political solution that would guarantee the territorial integrity of Syria, in accordance with the decisions taken at the first Geneva conference.

39. The Supreme Council welcomed the outcomes of the Third International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria, which was held in Kuwait in March 2015, and called on donors to fulfil their pledges rapidly. The Council looked forward to the convening of the Fourth International Humanitarian Pledging Conference for Syria, which would be hosted by Great Britain in February 2016, and trusted that it would see a high level of participation.

40. The Supreme Council stated that it was committed to continuing to work to alleviate the suffering of the Syrian people, whose lives have been profoundly affected by the crisis. It urged prompt implementation of Security Council resolution 2165 (2014) of 14 July 2014 concerning the direct, immediate and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people.

41. The Supreme Council called on the international community to assume its responsibility to support refugees from Syria. It welcomed the efforts of member States to alleviate the suffering of Syrian displaced persons and refugees, who had been expelled and seen their property destroyed by the Bashar al-Assad regime. It emphasized that Syrian brethren would be treated as residents of the Gulf States and would enjoy full rights to free health care and to education and work in accordance with the residency rules in force in the GCC States. It commended the leading role of the Gulf States, which had provided material and in-kind support to their Syrian brethren and refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and elsewhere, in coordination with host States or through international and humanitarian relief agencies. It also commended the Gulf States' initiatives to hold donor conferences in order to mobilize resources for humanitarian work in Syria.

42. The Supreme Council expressed its grave concern at the increase in hostile, racist and inhumane speech directed against refugees in general and Muslims in particular. It reiterated its call for States, humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations and the media to eschew racist speech, help raise awareness and assume their responsibility to provide the necessary protection for displaced persons and refugees who had fled to escape the oppression of the authorities and terrorist groups.

43. The Supreme Council welcomed Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), adopted in August 2015, concerning the establishment of a joint mechanism between the United Nations and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical

Weapons with the purpose of identifying those responsible for the use of chemicals including chlorine gas during the conflict in Syria. It considered that resolution to be a message from the international community in order to tackle the use of internationally prohibited weapons. It urged the international community to cooperate genuinely in that process and hold those responsible to account for their crimes.

#### **Yemen**

44. The Supreme Council commended the successes of the popular resistance and the Army loyal to the legitimate authorities against the militias of Al-Houthi and Ali Abdullah Saleh. The Council welcomed the liberation of Aden and other cities and governorates of Yemen. It also emphasized that it would continue to support His Excellency President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi and his legitimate Government and work to restore security and stability throughout Yemen.

45. The Supreme Council stated that it was fully committed to the unity, sovereignty and independence of Yemen and rejected any interference in that country's internal affairs. It stressed the importance of reaching a political solution in accordance with the GCC Initiative, its Implementation Mechanism and the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference in Riyadh. It further highlighted the need for comprehensive and unconditional implementation of Security Council resolution 2216 (2015).

46. The Supreme Council commended the efforts of the United Nations through the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Yemen, Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, pursuant to Security Council resolution 2216 (2015). It welcomed the announcement that negotiations would resume in Switzerland on 15 December 2015 and that the Yemeni Government had agreed to take part.

47. The Supreme Council commended the efforts of GCC States to deliver and distribute humanitarian and medical assistance as widely as possible to the Yemeni people. In that connection, the Council expressed appreciation for the considerable humanitarian role of the King Salman Centre for Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre. It called on the international community to intensify humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people.

48. The Supreme Council strongly condemned the Houthi and Saleh militias' grave crimes against civilians, including killings, abductions, detentions, child recruitment, the blockading of civilians and their use as human shields, the bombardment and destruction of civilian areas, the torturing of prisoners, attacks on political and media freedoms, the violation of private and public property and educational and medical facilities, and the irresponsible hindering of international efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance across Yemen, all of which amounted to clear violations of international humanitarian law and human rights instruments.

#### **Iraq**

49. The Supreme Council expressed its hope that the decision of the Government of Iraq and the Council of Representatives to take tangible measures to address corruption and the deterioration of services would put the political process back on track and ensure that all components of the Iraqi people could participate effectively

and implement all of the reforms agreed in 2014 in response to the demands of the people of Iraq.

50. The Supreme Council reiterated its support for Security Council resolution 2107 (2013). It unanimously decided to refer the issue of prisoners, missing persons, Kuwaiti property and the national archives to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) for follow-up. It called on the Government of Iraq to continue cooperating with the State of Kuwait and the international community on that issue.

### **Libya**

51. The Supreme Council stressed the need for a political solution to the situation in Libya under the auspices of the United Nations. It urged all parties to put the greater good first, in order to restore security and stability in Libya.

52. The Supreme Council reaffirmed its full support for the legitimate Government. It thanked the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Bernardino León, for facilitating the political dialogue, and extended its best wishes to the incoming Special Envoy, Mr. Martin Kobler, in the search for a political solution acceptable to the parties in Libya.

53. The Supreme Council expressed concern at the escalation of armed operations and violence in Libya by armed extremist groups. It emphasized its commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Libya.

54. The Supreme Council reappointed His Excellency Dr. Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani as Secretary-General of GCC for an additional three-year term beginning on 1 April 2017, in recognition of his considerable efforts and effective contribution to the activities of GCC. It wished him success in his forthcoming term.

55. The Supreme Council thanked King Salman, as chair of the current session of the Supreme Council, his Government and the people of Saudi Arabia for the warm and genuine hospitality extended to the leaders and delegations of the GCC States.

56. The leaders of the States members of the Gulf Cooperation Council welcomed the generous offer of King Hamad bin Issa Al Khalifa to host the thirty-seventh session of the Supreme Council in Bahrain in 2016.

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Thursday, 28 Safar A.H. 1437 (10 December A.D. 2015)